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ABSTRACT

The Personal Safety Project was conducted at an elementary school in Vancouver, British Columbia to prevent child sexual misuse/abuse. Awareness and information workshops were held for teachers and parents, while a personal safety workshop was given for children to help them to identify exploitative touch situations and to call for appropriate assistance when needed. Questionnaire surveys indicated that teachers responded better to hypothetical situations (a child complaining of being sexually misused) and felt more comfortable about discussing sexual misuse in class after participating in the workshop. Parents indicated greater likelihood of believing children's complaints of sexual misuse and greater ease in discussing sexual topics at home after attending the workshop, but showed no improvement in knowing where to get appropriate assistance for a child's sexual misuse complaint. In an experimental situation in which first and fifth graders were examined for their ability to terminate a discomforting touch (a continuous handshake), all fifth graders who attended the program, but only 1 out of 10 first graders, successfully terminated the touch. In questionnaire responses, students showed improved awareness of potentially dangerous situations, indicated that they valued their bodies more, and demonstrated greater self-esteem after the program. Observed behavior problems decreased for intermediate students and remained constant for primary students after the program. (Author/MJL)

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AN EVALUATION OF THE PERSONAL SAFETY PROJECT: A PREVENTATIVE APPROACH TO CHILD SEXUAL MISUSE

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Research Report 82-04

Ronald A. LaTorre

1982 July

Evaluation and Research Services
Program Resources
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Children are the least articulate and most exploited population suffering from society's failure to confront realistically the phenomenon of human sexuality.

- Carolyn Swift, Sexual Assault of Children and Adolescents

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SUBJECT

Personal Safety/Child Sexual Abuse/Child Sexual Misuse/Prevention/Elementary School Children/ Teachers/Parents/Self-Esteem/Body Valuation/Confusing and Exploitative Touch/Behaviour Problems

ABSTRACT

Type of Study:
Quasi-Experimental

Sample:
Elementary students, their teachers, and their parents.

Methodology:
The overall design was a pretest-posttest design. Students taking part in the Personal Safety Program were administered, both prior to and subsequent to the program, a body valuation test, a self-esteem inventory and a test of awareness of potentially dangerous situations. Their parents completed a behaviour problems checklist both before and after the program. Parents attending the Parents' Workshop completed pretest and posttest surveys to determine the effectiveness of that Workshop. Teachers at the school also completed pretest and posttest surveys to determine the effectiveness of the Teachers' Workshop. Students who took part in the program were contrasted with students who had not taken part in the program, in a control-group posttest only design, to determine their ability to successfully terminate, verbally or nonverbally, a discomforting touch.

Findings:
1. Following the Teachers' Workshop, teachers produced, on paper, better responses to a hypothetical child complaining of being sexually misused.
2. Teachers' knowledge of where to go to obtain assistance was so appropriate on the pretest survey that it was not possible to show a significant change on the posttest.
3. Teachers reported that they would feel more comfortable discussing the topic of sexual misuse in class on the posttest survey than they had on the pretest survey.
4. Following the Parents' Workshop, parents were more likely to believe a complaint of child sexual misuse.
5. The workshop appeared to fail in teaching parents where to go for appropriate assistance for a child complaining of sexual misuse. A large percentage of parents gave inappropriate responses on both pretest and posttest surveys (58% vs. 47%, respectively).
6. Parents reported that they would feel more comfortable discussing the topic of sexual misuse at the dinner table on the posttest survey than on the pretest survey.
7. Only one out of ten Grade 1 children, who had been exposed to the program, was successful in terminating an uncomfortable touch (continuous handshake).
8. All Grade 5 children exposed to the program successfully terminated the uncomfortable touch. Only 40% of Grade 5 students not exposed to the program were successful.
9. Overall, students' awareness of potentially dangerous situations was enhanced following the program.
10. Students believed that their body parts were more valuable subsequent to the program than they did prior to the program.
11. Students demonstrated elevated self-esteem scores on the posttest.
12. The incidence of problem behaviours, as reported by parents, decreased for intermediate students and remained constant for primary students.

Availability: Evaluation and Research Services, Program Resources, Vancouver School Board.

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This report presents evidence regarding the effectiveness of the Personal Safety Pilot Project which took place at one elementary school in S.D. #39, Vancouver. The original aim of the project, which has remained the primary aim throughout the project, was the prevention of child sexual abuse (Vancouver School Board, 1981). In what was basically an attempt to mollify parents, whom project and school staff feared would become overly apprehensive, the title of the project changed from "child sexual abuse program" (Vancouver School Board, 1981), to "sexual abuse and personal safety pilot program" (Labonte, 1981) and, finally, to "personal safety" workshop/project/program (Vancouver School Board, 1982). Another reason for the change in program name was to reflect the more comprehensive focus of the program which was preferred by the piloting school.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

There was good reason to expect parental apprehension had the term child sexual abuse been retained. Child sexual abuse is defined as "molestation or incest by family member or due to neglect on the part of parent in supervising the child" (Province of British Columbia, 1979). The term "personal safety" was more comprehensive and referred to "... your body, your feelings, and your right to protect them" (Labonte, 1981).

In reality, the "personal safety" program was directed at the sexual misuse of children by anyone -- parent, relative, friend or stranger. Nonetheless, all parties concerned realized that the majority of child sexual misuse, if exhibitionism is excluded, is perpetrated by someone known to the victim. Exhibitionism, the most common form of child sexual misuse (Kinsey, Pomeroy, Martin, & Gebhard, 1953), is most often perpetrated by a stranger.

EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM

Due to the sensitive nature of child sexual misuse and the lack of a consistent and standardized method of reporting, the exact extent of the problem is unknown. The one thing that most people agree on is that the actual number of cases is far greater than the reported number (Finkelhor, 1978 (a); Landis, 1956; Rush, 1980; Schmitt, 1975, Standing Committee on Health, Welfare and Social Affairs, 1976). Below are some of the published statistics.

- One in eight children are sexually misused (Taking Responsible Action for Children and Youth, undated)
- 150 of every 100,000 children (i.e., 0.15%) report being sexually abused to police (Geiser, 1979)
- About one out of every four reported sex crimes involve a victim under the age of 14 years (Keefe, 1978; Rush, 1980); about one in ten involve a victim under nine years of age (Rush, 1980)

- 75% to 85% of all reported crimes against children are of a sexual nature (Brooklyn Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, 1977)

- Approximately 30% of reported cases of sexual child misuse involve a male victim (Harrer, Copeland, Brody, & Watkins, 1976; Swift, 1977)

- In cases of child sexual misuse, boys are almost twice as likely to be penetrated (orally or anally) than are girls (orally, anally or vaginally)(Blalock, 1979; Harrer et al., 1976; Swift, 1979)

- Between 19% and 30% of college women report having been sexually misused as children (Finkelhor, 1979; Landis, 1956)

- Between 9% and 30% of college men report having been sexually misused as children (Finkelhor, 1979; Landis, 1956)

- 70% of adolescent drug abusers are victims of some type of sexual misuse (Weber, 1977)

- 44% of female drug addicts are victims of incest (Densen-Gerber & Benward, 1977)

- 50% of all runaway adolescents are victims of incest (Densen-Gerber & Benward, 1977)

- 75% of adolescent female prostitutes are victims of incest (Weber, 1977)

- 1% of adult women are victims of father-daughter incest (Herman, 1981)

- The offender is a man in 80% to 90% of child sexual misuse cases (Rush, 1980)

- The offender is a relative or friend of the victim in 70% to 80% of child sexual misuse cases (Rush, 1980; Shamroy, 1980)

- Physical force is used by 10% to 17% of child molesters (Groth, 1980; Law, 1979)

The above statistics suffer from one or more problems which jeopardize both their validity and their generalizability. Many of the statistics are based on "reported" cases. With general concensus that child sexual misuse is grossly under-reported, one is looking at statistics with questionable representativeness. Almost every statistic presented is based on a geographically circumscribed area (e.g., San Francisco, Seattle, Kansas City) which limits the confidence one has in generalizing to other areas. These and other methodological shortcomings had earlier been addressed by Kinsey et al. (1953). Using a more representative cross-sectional sample of about 4,000 women, Kinsey et al. found that approximately one in four had been sexually misused before the age of 13 years. Because this statistic is widely cited, it is important to examine it in more detail. About half (52%) of the incidents involved acts of exhibitionism. Twenty-seven percent involved genital manipulation (either adult manipulating child's or adult having child manipulate his); 3% involved coitus.

RESEARCH

Research in child sexual misuse has primarily focused on three areas: (a) incidence, (b) characteristics of the offender, and (c) treatment strategies for the victim or for the offender or for both (Paulson, 1978).

Studies of incidence have been reviewed in the previous section. The goal of many of these studies, beyond the simple dissemination of information, is to lay the foundation for, or add impetus to, courses which favour immediate and substantive action to rectify a pervasive social and moral problem.

Studies have examined offender characteristics with the hope of contributing to early intervention rather than primary prevention (Blumberg, 1978; Dosch, 1979; Finkelhor, 1978 (a), 1978 (b); MacFarlane, 1978; Rosenfeld, 1978; Swift, 1979; Walters, 1975). A wave of studies on treating the offender, the victim, or both reinforces the notion that society has concentrated its efforts on post-factum as opposed to prophylactic intervention (Anderson & Shafer, 1979; Berliner, 1977; Gentry, 1978; Giarretto, 1976, 1978; Knittle & Tuana, 1980; MacFarlane, 1978; Mrazek, 1980; Shamroy, 1980; Slager-Jorne, 1978; Walters, 1975; Weitzel et al., 1978). Studies of offender characteristics and post-factum intervention will not be reviewed here because they are not directly relevant to prevention of child sexual misuse.

Research on the primary prevention of child sexual misuse is sparse. One naturalistic observation from Denmark, supported by research on prisoners, indicated that pornography could be related to a 69% decrease in reported sex offenses against children observed between 1959 and 1969 (Ben-Veniste, 1971; Goldstein, 1971; Kutchinsky, 1971). There is, in addition, a social experiment with children which showed the effectiveness of a combined program of modelling, behaviour rehearsal and social reinforcement. While such results are encouraging, one must consider the extensive expenditure of time, effort, and resources to train children using the above-mentioned techniques. A more economical program which has the capability of reaching a larger and more varied audience is therefore desirable. The next section of this report outlines such a program developed by TRACY (Taking Responsible Action for Children and Youth) and implemented, on a pilot basis, in the Vancouver school system.

THE PERSONAL SAFETY PROJECT

At the meeting of the Board of School Trustees, School District #39 (Vancouver), on 1981 April 6, the following motion was passed:

> "That the Board proceed with the implementation of a child sexual abuse program on the following basis:
>
> a) that a pilot program be offered to the principals and staff of Vancouver elementary schools;
>
> b) that only one school undertake the pilot project;
>
> c) that the pilot project follow the guidelines laid down for Family Life Education;
>
> d) that Program Resources set up an evaluation plan to monitor the project and produce an evaluation at the conclusion of the pilot." (Vancouver School Board, 1981).

As a result of other districts' experiences with Family Life Education, local community involvement became a pre-requisite for what was termed a "controversial area" (Education Officials 1981). Consequently, the implementation of the program was dependent not only on acceptance by the staff of the adopting school, but also on the acceptance by the parents of the children enrolled at the adopting school. No child was allowed to participate in the program without the parent's or guardian's written consent.

The Personal Safety Project consisted of three parts: (a) a teachers' workshop, (b) a parents' workshop, and (c) a personal safety workshop for children.

TEACHERS' WORKSHOP

The stated goals for the teachers were, upon completion of the workshop,

(a) to differentiate between nurturing, confusing and exploitative touch;

(b) to believe and support a child who has been touched in a way that the child dislikes, regardless of who the toucher has been;

(c) to respond appropriately to a child who has come to them with a problem;

(d) to know where to go for appropriate assistance for the child and the family; and

(e) to know the child abuse and child neglect policy and procedures outlined by the Ministry of Human Resources.

The workshop was divided into two sections. During the first section, the Human Sexuality Consultant from the Ministry of Human Resources

(a) defined sexual abuse;

(b) stressed the importance of believing any child who reports being misused;

(c) presented prevalence statistics;

(d) listed signs of child sexual misuse;

(e) discussed myths surrounding child sexual misuse;

(f) disseminated information about reporting child sexual misuse; and

(g) distributed information packets prepared by the Ministry of Human Resources.

The second section of the Teachers' Workshop was a preview, by the Green Thumb Players, of the Personal Safety Workshop for Children. The theme song, with its chorus of "My body's nobody's body but mine ... you run your own body -- let me run mine," was introduced along with an overview of various kinds of touch. "Yes" touches were defined as those which produced unpleasant or confusing feelings. Teachers commented on the suitability of the presentation for children of various age (grade) levels.

PARENTS' WORKSHOP

The stated goals for the parents were, upon completion of the workshop,

(a) to differentiate between nurturing, confusing and exploitative touch;

(b) to believe and support their child who has been touched in a way that the child dislikes, regardless of whether the toucher has been a friend of their own, a stranger, a family friend or relative;

(c) to respond appropriately to a child (their own or a friend's) who has come to them with a problem of sexual misuse; and

(d) to know where to go for appropriate assistance for the child and the family.

There were two parents' workshops. The first was divided into four sections. During the first section, the Human Sexuality Consultant from the Ministry of Human Resources presented a brief overview of child sexual abuse and stressed societal attitudes toward it. The Consultant then distributed four briefly written situations about yes and no touches. The parents were asked, for the second section, to form small groups of five to eight people and to discuss those situations as well as strategies for dealing with them. The third section comprised enactment of those situations by the Green Thumb Players. For the final section, a member of the Vancouver Child Abuse Team discussed procedures for reporting cases of child sexual misuse. Brochures were made available for interested parents.

The second parents' workshop was divided into two sections. During the first part of that session, parents were formed into pairs and asked to relate, to their partner, a situation which they experienced which made them feel uncomfortable. The partner was to respond in an appropriate manner. Feedback was given to the listener by the speaker. During the second part of the session, parents were combined into small groups and each took a turn at responding to a Green Thumb Player who enacted a child relating an incidence of sexual misuse. The purpose of the role playing was to enhance parents' awareness of and ability to emit an appropriate response to a child complaining of sexual misuse.

PERSONAL SAFETY WORKSHOP FOR CHILDREN

The goals for the students were, upon completion of the program,

(a) to know the vocabulary of the touch continuum;

(b) to differentiate the kinds of touch;

(c) to identify the point at which touch becomes confusing or exploitative or both;

(d) to develop verbal and/or non-verbal strategies to use when touch becomes confusing or exploitative; and

(e) to be able to call on appropriate support systems for assistance for themselves or others.

The Children's Workshop consisted of dramatizations by the Green Thumb Players. Consistent throughout these dramatizations was the previously mentioned theme song "My body's nobody's body but mine ..." Dramatizations centered about confusing and exploitative situations and were enhanced by stop-action improvisations and audience participation.

Subsequent to the dramatizations, children were shown the film "Who Do You Tell?" This 11 minute film, intended for pre-teen children shows the support systems available to children for perilous situations. Child sexual misuse is one of the perilous situations addressed in the film.

In addition to the workshop proper, teachers undertook various activities to emphasize and strengthen the thrust of the program.

DESIGN OF THE EVALUATION

A pretest-posttest design was used for the majority of factors investigated in this evaluation (Isaac & Michael, 1971). This is, individuals were administered a questionnaire prior to their involvement in the program and were then administered the same questionnaire subsequent to their involvement. Although changes between pretest and posttest are assumed to be produced by the program, there are some reasons why a change could occur independent of the program. These possible limitations are discussed in succeeding paragraphs.

One plausible rival hypothesis is that any change is due to historical events. That is, the participants may have experienced an event, beside the program, which affected their posttest results. Two major historical events, a televised special on child abuse and media coverage of a local case of child sexual misuse and murder, occurred prior to pretesting and are therefore unlikely to affect pretest-posttest changes.

Another possible error is introduced by maturation. People's biological and psychological processes change as they age and such changes may produce posttest differences. The effects of maturation are unlikely in this study. The time interval between pretest and posttest was approximately two months and, while some maturation may occur in elementary students over a two-month interval, every test was given to several grade levels so that any age-related maturation changes would not play a large part in the overall results.

A third concern with the pretest-posttest design is that the completion of the pretest questionnaire, alone, may affect the way that the posttest questionnaire is completed. Parents, teachers or pupils may have discussed the items on the pretest questionnaire and may have allowed such discussion to affect their posttest responses.

A fourth concern is instrumentation -- whether changes in the questionnaires produced any observed pretest-posttest differences. Since the pretest-posttest questionnaires were identical and since several have established test-retest reliabilities, this would not appear to be an issue. There is one questionnaire, however, which might have been affected. Parents were asked to complete a checklist denoting problem behaviours exhibited by their children. Changes in the parents, as raters of their childrens' behaviours, may have produced changes in their ratings of their children. Because there is no evidence to suggest that ratings of childrens' behaviours become more or less stringent with successive ratings, we must assume that the direction of such changes will occur randomly. Changes toward more inclusive ratings

(i.e., rating more behaviours as problematic) will balance out changes toward more exclusive ratings.

Although such threats to internal validity exist in the pretest-posttest design, that design has a major strength in providing a comparison between performances by the same group of individuals both before and after exposure to the program.

As part of the evaluation of the program, a behavioural assessment of its effects was also conducted. For this particular assessment -- a continuous handshake technique to be discussed in a later section -- it was believed that a pretest would definitely affect the posttest. Further, the nature of the assessment required an immediate debriefing or explanation of the assessment to the participant. Such an explanation would invalidate further testing on the posttest. Because of these concerns, a control-group posttest only design was used (Isaac & Michael, 1971). This involves testing a group of students who participated in the program at a time subsequent to the program as well as testing a group of students, at the same historical time, who did not participate in the program. This design avoids the pitfalls outlined for the pretest-posttest design but leaves one question unanswered: are any observed differences the direct result of the program or might they be the result of pre-existing group differences? That is, had there been a pretest, might the two groups have differed even on the pretest?

The purpose of this section has been to outline the research designs used as well as to sensitize the reader to the limitations of those designs. It should be stressed that, given the lack of freedom to randomly assign individuals to various groups, any design would have had limitations.

STATISTICAL ANALYSES

The statistical tests used for evaluating the obtained results were dependent on both the design and the nature of the data. When the pretest-posttest design was used and data were continuous (i.e., data could be best represented as a continuum rather than as discrete units), the Student's *t*-Test for differences between means for correlated data was used (Craig & Metze, 1979). When the data were best represented as discrete units but were obtained within the pretest-posttest design, they were subjected to the Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-ranks *T*-test (Kirk, 1978). When the number of pairs of scores exceeded 50 but data were discrete units obtained from the pretest-posttest design, the normal approximation procedure was applied and is denoted as a z-score (Kirk, 1978).

The control-group posttest only design used in this study produced data that was analyzed with the Student's *t*-Test for differences between means for uncorrelated data (Craig & Metze, 1979).

METHOD AND RESULTS

TEACHERS' WORKSHOP

The pretest questionnaire for the teachers' workshop consisted of two open-ended questions: "How would you respond to a child who told you that he or she was being sexually abused by a parent or guardian?" and "What would you do (i.e., what procedure would you follow to obtain help for that child?"). It also contained three items with multiple-response alternatives, only one of these items was used to assess the teachers' workshop: "How comfortable would you have felt if, in the past month, a child had brought up the topic of sexual abuse in front of the entire class?" Alternative responses were very comfortable, fairly comfortable, barely comfortable, a little uncomfortable, and very uncomfortable.

The posttest questionnaire was administered two months after the pretest questionnaire and consisted of the same five items along with a sixth item asking teachers to rate the usefulness of the workshop on a four-point scale (extremely useful, very useful, somewhat useful, not at all useful).

Although 20 individuals completed a pretest questionnaire, only 17 completed the posttest questionnaire. The responses of the three individuals who did not complete the posttest questionnaire were excluded from the statistical analyses.

The first open-ended question "How would you respond ..." assessed the teacher's ability to believe and support a child who had been sexually misused as well as the teacher's ability to respond appropriately to that child. Responses were coded and then given to the Human Sexuality Consultant who conducted the Teachers' Workshop and a member of the Child Abuse Team to rate as to their quality on a six-point scale. Both raters were blind as to whether any response was a pretest or posttest response and ratings were determined by consensus.

Posttest responses were significantly better than pretest responses, $t(15) = 3.30$, $p < .005$. The average ($\bar{X}$) rating for pretest responses was 2.3 on the six-point scale while the average ($\bar{X}$) rating for posttest responses was 4.2

The second question "What would you do ..." assessed the teacher's knowledge of where to go for appropriate assistance as well as his or her knowledge of the child abuse and child neglect policy and procedures outlined by the Ministry of Human Resources. Again the Human Sexuality Consultant and a member of the Child Abuse Team read each response blind as to its pretest/posttest status. The raters believed that the quality of the response could not be rated on a six-point scale because responses were dichotomously either appropriate or inappropriate. Of 34 responses (17 pretest and 17 posttest), only four were judged to be inappropriate. Three of those inappropriate responses were pretest responses; the fourth was the posttest response of a teacher who also gave an inappropriate pretest response. The number of inappropriate responses is so small that statistical manipulation would not be meaningful. It does appear that the majority of teachers know the appropriate reporting procedure.

Teachers were also asked how comfortable they would have felt had a child brought up the topic of sexual abuse in class. It was believed that the Teachers' Workshop, by equipping teachers with knowledge and assurance, would make them feel more comfortable in dealing with the subject. Degree of comfort was rated on a five-point scale (1 = very comfortable; 5 = very uncomfortable). Teachers reported that they would feel significantly more comfortable about discussing the subject after being exposed to the program ($\bar{X}$ = 1.8) than prior to exposure to the program ($\bar{X}$ = 3.0; a high score reflects greater discomfort), $t(15) = 4.17$, $p < .005$.

When asked, on the posttest questionnaire, how useful the Teachers' Workshop had been, 14 individuals rated it as having been extremely useful and three rated it as having been very useful.

PARENTS' WORKSHOP

The pretest questionnaire for parents included one open-ended question, "[If a child told you that a relative had repeatedly touched his or her private parts and] if you believed that child, ... would you try to obtain assistance for the child? If so, where would you go to obtain such assistance?" The questionnaire also included three multiple-choice items. Two of these were used to evaluate the Teachers' Workshop. One assessed the degree to which a parent would believe a child who complained of sexual misuse using a five-point scale (1 = unquestionably believe the child; 5 = disbelieve the child). The other item assessed how comfortable the parent would have been if their "child brought up the topic of sexual abuse or sexual molestation at the dinner table" and it, too, was rated on a five-point scale (1 = very comfortable; 5 = very uncomfortable).

The posttest questionnaire, administered two months after the pretest questionnaire, consisted of the identical items as were on the pretest questionnaire as well as one additional item inquiring as to the perceived usefulness of the Parents' Workshop. Thirty-two individuals attending the Parents' Workshop completed a pretest survey; 17 responded to the posttest survey. Statistical analyses are reported for those 17 who submitted both pretest and posttest questionnaires.

The question inquiring as to the level of belief a parent would experience if a child told them they were being sexually misused was for the purpose of assessing changes in the parent's belief, support and appropriate response for a child who made such a report. That an individual believe such a report was a fundamental concern stressed at the workshop. Parents responses indicated that they would have been more likely to believe such a report after having attended the workshop ($\bar{X}$ = 1.5) than they would have been prior to the workshop ($\bar{X}$ = 1.8; the larger the value the less the belief). Although the pretest/posttest difference was small, it was statistically significant, $t(16) = 2.2$, $p < .025$.

The open-ended question concerning where a person should go to obtain assistance for a sexually misused child assessed the parent's knowledge of an appropriate response to a sexually misused child and where to go for appropriate assistance. As with a similar question on the teacher's

questionnaire, the Human Sexuality Consultant and a member of the Child Abuse Team (both of whom presented material at the Parents' Workshop) sorted the responses into those which were appropriate and those which were inappropriate. They were both blind as to the pretest/posttest status of the responses. Of 34 responses (17 pretest and 17 posttest), 18 responses were considered to be inappropriate. Ten of these were pretest responses, but eight inappropriate responses were found on the posttest questionnaire. Half of those who gave inappropriate pretest responses improved by giving appropriate posttest responses, but three individuals who gave appropriate pretest responses produced inappropriate posttest responses. There therefore appears to be no support of the hypothesis that the Parents' Workshop would produce a lasting knowledge of where to go for appropriate assistance in the event that a child reported to them that she or he were being sexually misused.

The five-point rating scale used to determine the degree of comfort or discomfort a parent would feel if their child brought up the topic of sexual misuse at the dinner table revealed that parents would feel more comfortable in that situation subsequent to the Workshop ($\bar{X} = 1.6$) than prior to the Workshop ($\bar{X} = 2.5$; the greater the number the less comfortable the parent would feel), $t(16) = 3.92$, $p < .005$.

In response to the posttest question assessing degree of perceived usefulness of the Parents' Workshop, 11 individuals (68.8%) claimed that it was extremely useful, four (25%) claimed it was very useful, and one (6.3%) claimed it was somewhat useful.

ERSONAL SAFETY WORKSHOP FOR CHILDREN

The evaluation of the Personal Safety Workshop for Children focused on the following areas: (1) realization of confusing or "no" feeling and effective behaviour to remove oneself from the situation causing it (the overall goal of the program); (b) body valuation or one's feeling of worth regarding one's body (an area predicted to be affected by the nature of the program as exemplified by the theme song); (c) self-esteem which has been shown to be highly correlated with body valuation; and (d) recognition of potentially dangerous or "no" situations which was a specific, although unspecified, objective. In addition to the foregoing areas which were hypothesized to show a pretest/posttest difference because the program directly addressed those areas, the manifestation of problem behaviours was also assessed. From a concern that the program, due to its very nature or the presentation of the material, might have had a deleterious impact on such young children, the preprogram and postprogram problem behaviours of participating children was assessed in order to determine changes in such behaviours.

To avoid overburdening teachers and students with numerous pretest and posttest questionnaires, any class in the school participated in the assessment of no more than two of the four areas which required student responses (i.e., ability to use effective verbal or nonverbal strategies to escape confusing or exploitative touch, recognition of potentially dangerous or exploitative situations, body valuation, and self-esteem.

ABILITY TO ESCAPE CONFUSING OR EXPLOITATIVE TOUCH

To determine whether the program had a significant impact on the student's ability to recognize the "no" feeling and to actually use a verbal or nonverbal strategy to escape from a confusing or exploitative touch, a behavioural assessment was employed. A behavioural assessment was employed because one's knowledge of the proper course of action does not necessarily mean that one will pursue that course in the actual situation. A random sample of Grade 1 and Grade 5 students (five girls and five boys in each group) was therefore subjected to an uncomfortable touch. This uncomfortable touch was a continuous handshake.

The children who were randomly selected were asked to take part in a study assessing the students' abilities to perform various word puzzles. The Child Care Worker at the school explained the study briefly to each child, brought the child to the testing room, and introduced a young man who was conducting the study. The Child Care Worker informed each student that she or he would be waiting just outside the door for the student to finish. The door remained open and at no time did the young male experimenter position himself between the student and the open door. As the Child Care Worker left the room, the male experimenter greeted the student by shaking hands with the student. The experimenter continued the handshake for one minute or until the student, through verbal or non-verbal means, attempted to discontinue the handshake. If the student did discontinue the handshake, the experimenter recorded the number of seconds that expired between the beginning of the handshake and its discontinuation. The experimenter continued a conversation with the student throughout the entire handshake.

Subsequent to the handshake, the student was presented with a verbal puzzle. Grade 1 students were asked to rearrange letters to make simple words and Grade 5 students were asked to find hidden words in a matrix of letters. Students were allowed one minute to work on the task. They were then thanked for their cooperation and the experimenter initiated a second handshake which was terminated when the student verbally or nonverbally indicated the desire to withdraw his or her hand or at the expiry of 30 seconds, whichever occurred first.

The student was then greeted outside the room by the Child Care Worker who asked a series of questions designed to encourage the student to disclose any uncomfortableness they experienced during the test.

The experimenter himself was a professional actor hired to take part in a study to assess the effects of a mildly stressful event (the continuous handshake) on cognitive performance (the verbal puzzles). That is, he was blind as to the true purpose of the study.

Each student was debriefed, in same-grade groups, shortly after their participation. During debriefing, almost all students expressed some confusing, odd, strange, or discomforting feeling associated with the handshake. The Child Care Worker discussed the true nature of the study, the importance of the study in order to determine the effectiveness of the program, and insured that no student possessed residual negative feelings associated with the test.

For this particular test, a posttest-only control-group design was used for reasons outlined in the preceding "Design of the Evaluation" section. The control school was selected on the bases of its similarity to the experimental school (i.e., the school with the program) in (a) geographical location, (b) socioeconomic level of catchment area, (c) ethnic composition of students, and (d) the presence of a Child Care Worker.

Grade 1. The Grade 1 results were disappointing. Only one girl out of the ten children tested discontinued the handshake prior to the 60 seconds time limit. She did so at eight seconds into the handshake by pulling away "but not with any great excitement" as was noted in the examiner's notes. During the second handshake, the same girl discontinued the handshake at five seconds and an additional girl discontinued at 24 seconds. The results were so poor that it was decided to spare the control school the time and effort to serve as a comparison for the Grade 1 results. It would have been statistically impossible to show a significant difference in favour of the experimental school.

Grade 5. All of the Grade 5 students at the experimental school terminated the handshake prior to 60 seconds in contrast to only four of the ten students at the control school. The average time-to-termination was 17.9 seconds for the experimental school and 42.8 seconds for the control school. That difference was statistically significant, $t(18) = 2.82$, $p < .01$. Grade 5 students who took part in the program were more likely to take the verbal or nonverbal steps required to escape the uncomfortable situation of a continuous handshake than were Grade 5 students who had not taken part in the program.

AWARENESS OF POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS SITUATIONS

To determine changes in students' awareness of potentially dangerous situations, a Red Light/Green Light Colouring Book for primary students and a Red Light/Green Light Questionnaire for intermediate students were developed The task for both the Colouring Book and Questionnaire was similar. Students specified which situations made them feel good or okay (Green Light situations) and which made them feel bad or confused (Red Light situations). The Red Light/Green Light concept as well as the pictures used in the colouring book were adapted from Red Flag Green Flag People (Williams, 1980).

The Red Light/Green Light Colouring Book test consisted of two sample items and five test items and was administered in a pretest-posttest design to two classes. One was a Kindergarten-Grade 1 combination class and the other was a Grade 1-Grade 2-Grade 3 combination class.

The Red Light/Green Light Questionnaire consisted of ten items. It was administered in a pretest-posttest design to two intermediate classes. One was a Grade 6 class and the other was a Grade 7 class.

Primary Students. A total of 34 primary students completed both pretest and posttest Colouring Books. Only ten students made inappropriate responses on the pretest. Nonetheless, the students' posttest performance

was significantly better than their pretest performance, $T(34) = 150$, $p < .01$. A total of 15 inappropriate responses were evident on the pretest, and only one inappropriate response was evident on the posttest. The results were as significant for the Kindergarten-Grade 1 class ($T(15) = 27.5$, $p < .05$) as they were for the Grade 1-Grade 2-Grade 3 class ($T(17) = 39$, $p < .05$).

Intermediate Students. A total of 51 intermediate students completed the questionnaire on both the pretest and posttest administrations. The average pretest score was 9.29 (out of 10) and the average posttest score was 9.54. That difference, although small, was statistically significant, $t(50) = 2.50$, $p < .01$. The pretest-posttest difference for Grade 7 students was significant ($t(26) = 1.77$, $p < .05$) but the difference for Grade 6 students was not ($t(23) = 1.42$, $.05 < p < .10$). It is obvious from the very high pretest scores that intermediate students are aware of potentially dangerous situations. At the same time, those same high pretest scores, by restricting the range of variability, impaired the test's ability to demonstrate significant pretest-posttest differences for Grade 6 students.

BODY VALUATION

A major thrust of the program was to enhance the child's view of their own body and to reinforce the child's notion that she or he alone has the right to their own body. It was hypothesized that the program would have enhanced a child's body image. Tests of body image, such as Secord and Jourard's (1953) Body Cathexis Test, are not suitable for elementary school children. Recently, a Body Valuation Form was developed which assessed children's self-perceived values of seven body parts (Vaughan, Stabler, & Clance, 1981). The Body Valuation Form consisted of seven identical figure drawings. One body part (e.g., eye, hand, leg) in each drawing is circled and named. The students writes in the monetary value he or she associates with that body part from a choice of seven discrete values ranging from $0 to $550.

The Body Valuation Form was adapted for this evaluation and administered in a pretest-posttest design to three classes. One class was a Grade 1 - Grade 2 - Grade 3 combination class, the second was a Grade 4 - Grade 5 combination class, and the third was a Grade 6 class.

A total of 59 students completed the Body Valuation Form as both a pretest and posttest measure. The posttest summative value of all body parts was significantly greater than the pretest value, $z = -4.61$, $p < .00003$. The pretest-posttest difference was significant for the primary students (Grade 1-Grade 2-Grade 3 combination class, $T(22) = 61.5$, $p < .025$), and for both classes of intermediate students (Grade 4-Grade 5 combination class, $T(13) = 21$, $p = .05$; Grade 6 class, $T(22) = 5.5$, $p < .005$). Students believed that body parts were more valuable subsequent to the program than they had prior to the program. For the interest of anyone desiring more detailed information, the pretest and posttest values assigned to each body part for boys and girls separately and each class separately are shown in Table 1. The results show that for each class and each sex, the value of a finger and the value of a hand rise from pretest to posttest. They are the only body parts, assessed in this study, characterized by such consistent results.

TABLE 1

PRETEST AND POSTTEST MONETARY VALUES ASSIGNED
TO EACH OF SEVEN BODY PARTS BY
BOYS AND GIRLS IN EACH OF THREE CLASSES

GRADE 1-GRADE 2-GRADE 3 COMBINATION CLASS

BODY PARTS	*BOYS (n=9)*		*GIRLS (n=13)*	
	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest
eye	377.78	427.78	388.46	380.77
ear	400.00	383.33	411.54	373.08
arm	438.89	438.89	403.85	457.69
hand	305.56	362.50[a]	303.85	388.46
finger	77.78	216.67	126.92	265.38
leg	472.22	525.00[a]	488.46	483.33[b]
foot	261.11	427.78	334.62	457.69

GRADE 4-GRADE 5 COMBINATION CLASS

BODY PARTS	*BOYS (n=8)*		*GIRLS (n=6)*	
	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest
eye	437.50	431.25	300.00	383.33
ear	375.00	400.00	350.00	366.67
arm	387.50	375.00	433.33	433.33
hand	200.00	312.50	283.33	350.00
finger	150.00	243.75	58.33	133.33
leg	500.00	475.00	550.00	550.00
foot	300.00	400.00	433.33	316.67

a. n=8
b. n=12

TABLE 1 (cont'd.)

GRADE 6 CLASS

BODY PARTS	*BOYS (n=11)*		*GIRLS (n=12)*	
	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest
eye	463.64	531.82	491.67	516.67
ear	422.73	513.64	400.00	508.33
arm	495.45	540.91	466.67	525.00
hand	404.55	531.82	391.67	483.33
finger	231.82	404.55	158.33	379.17
leg	540.91	550.00	541.67	541.67
foot	450.00	513.64	466.67	500.00

SELF-ESTEEM

Program developers maintained that the program would have the additional effect of enhancing students' self-concepts. Given that body-image is intimately associated with self-esteem (Diamond, 1957; Fisher, 1970), this hypothesis of enhanced self-esteem seemed to naturally follow the hypothesis of enhanced body-image.

A review of recent literature showed the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (Coopersmith, 1965) to be the most commonly used self-esteem test for elementary school children. It has been used with children as young as seven and eight years-old (Johnson, Johnson, Olson, & Newman, 1981; Lawson, 1980; Thomson & Hartley, 1980), with learning disabled and brain-damaged children (Battle, Blowers, & Yeudall, 1980; Johnson, et al., 1981), with children of different ethnic groups (Kagan & Knight, 1979; Nelson, Knight, Kagan, & Gumbiner, 1980), and with intellectually gifted children (Houtz, Denmark, Rosenfield, & Tetenbaum, 1978).

The Self-Esteem Inventory consists of 58 items. Fifty of those items are used to assess an individual's self-esteem and eight items comprise a lie scale useful in determining the validity of an individual's response. The Self-Esteem Inventory has a five-week test-retest reliability of .88 and a three-year test-retest reliability of .70.

Three classes were administered the Self-Esteem Inventory in a pretest-posttest design. One class was a Grade 2-Grade 3-Grade 4 combination class, another was a Grade 5 class, and the third was a Grade 7 class. If a student attained a lie score of four or more on the lie scale (i.e., if half or more of their responses on the lie scale suggested an invalid response pattern), their test responses were excluded from statistical analysis. This was, admittedly, a strict criterion which would result in a substantial number of test protocols being rejected due to the possibility of invalid responses. Nonetheless, this strict criterion increases the assurance we have that our results are both valid and reliable.

A total of 63 students completed the pretest and posttest Self-Esteem Inventory. Twenty-two students' scores were excluded because they attained a lie score of four or more on either the pretest or posttest or both. For the remaining students, their self-esteem scores subsequent to the program ($\bar{X}$ = 34.2) were significantly greater than were their scores prior to the program ($\bar{X}$ = 31.7), $t(40) = 2.56$, $p < .01$. Analyses by class demonstrated that, while all three classes showed elevated posttest scores, only the pretest-posttest difference for Grade 5 students was significant, $t(10) = 3.37$, $p < .005$.

BEHAVIOUR PROBLEMS

There was a concern that the program's material might not be suitable for very young children and that the program might create difficulties where none previously existed. As a global assessment of the areas in which difficulties might arise, parents were asked to report, on a pretest-posttest basis, problem behaviours exhibited by their children. A modified version of the Parents' Rating Scale for Children (Form PBR 66-1; Cowen, Huser, Beach, & Rappaport, 1970) was used as the parents' reporting device. The modification was that, in lieu of rating on five-point scales each existing problem behaviour, parents were asked to specify whether or not their child exhibited that behaviour. That is, the test was changed from a rating scale to a checklist.

Every parent who granted permission to their child to participate in the program was sent one copy of the Checklist for each of their children one week prior to the program (n=241). Those that responded to the pretest Checklist were subsequently sent a posttest Checklist two months after the pretest. A total of 120 children (49% of the total sample) were assessed both prior to and subsequent to the program.

The pretest-posttest analysis revealed a significant decline in the number of reported behaviour problems, $t(119) = 3.04$, $p < .01$. This decline was significant for intermediate students ($t(48) = 2.44$, $p < .02$) but failed to attain significance for the primary students ($t(63) = 1.77$, $.10 > p > .05$).

The analysis of problem behaviours failed to demonstrate any global deterioration in behaviour subsequent to the program and, in fact, demonstrated a global improvement in the behaviour of intermediate students as reported by their parents or guardians. When a detailed investigation of parents' reports was conducted, a noticeable drop in the incidence of the following behaviours was noted: seeking attention, reacting poorly to failure, getting upset by criticism, being "fresh" (including talking back, arguing with adults). Although these specific changes were not predicted, most of those behaviours are indicative of a low self-esteem and the enhancement of self-esteem may have played a role in modifying those behaviours.

On the other hand, the behaviours most likely to show a rise in incidence were: crying, depending on others for help, and being "fresh" (including talking back, arguing with adults). The latter two behaviours may be generalizations from the program itself. They involve asserting oneself in uncomfortable situations and seeking the help of another when one is unable to successfully deal with uncomfortable situations. There

is no clear reason why the incidence of crying rose subsequent to the program. That change in behaviour was much more prevalent among primary than intermediate children.

CONCLUSION

The overall results of the program were both favourable and impressive. Teachers demonstrated desirable change in knowing how to respond to a child who complained of being sexually misused and they reported a greater feeling of comfort in dealing with the topic before the entire class. The inability to show a pretest-posttest change in their knowledge of appropriate reporting procedures was the result of consistently appropriate pretest responses. That is, teachers came to the program with the foreknowledge of proper reporting procedures.

Parents also demonstrated a desirable change in how they would respond to a child making such a complaint. Parents reported that they would be more likely to believe such a child weeks after the program than prior to the program. They also reported an increase in degree of comfortableness if the topic of sexual misuse were to be brought up at the dinner table. Despite the program, however, parents' reports of how they would try to obtain assistance for a sexually misused child were no more appropriate subsequent to the program than prior to the program. This was not due to foreknowledge, as was the case with the teachers' responses, because 58% of the parents who offered both pretest and posttest responses gave inappropriate pretest responses. It is clear that parents did not learn where to go for appropriate assistance for the sexually misused child and that child's family.

Changes in students' behaviours were evident for intermediate students as they reported enhanced body valuation and self-esteem as well as increased knowledge of potentially dangerous situations. In contrast to students at a school which did not have the benefit of the program, Grade 5 students were more likely to successfully terminate an uncomfortable touch (continuous handshake). This was one of the major goals of the entire program.

The findings for the primary students, while they are certainly no cause for alarm, should be the cause of some concern. Only one out of ten Grade 1 students were able to successfully terminate the continuous handshake despite the discomfort they felt in that situation. Despite the message from the workshop, primary students were unable to successfully assert themselves with an adult who was responsible for an uncomfortable touch.

Although there was no overall improvement or deterioration in the manifestation of problem behaviours for primary students, there was a noticeable increase in the incidence of crying as reported by parents. This phenomenon certainly requires further substantiation to rule out the possibility of its occurring by chance. There is some rationale which can be offered to explain it, if it is indeed linked to the program. The workshop stressed, at the outset, recognizing one's feelings. It is possible that this small group of primary students had previously been suppressing

or repressing their feelings or the behavioural manifestation of those feelings. The program possibly unleashed those feelings. Another possibility is that the material, despite all attempts to make it attractive and nonthreatening, adversely affected this small group. It should be emphasized that it was, indeed, a small group as less than a dozen primary students displayed the "problem behaviour" in response to the program. Nonetheless, it is important to thoroughly examine every instance in which a child, or group of children, may be adversely affected by any program. For the larger group of primary students, there was an improved knowledge of dangerous situations and a demonstrable enhancement of body valuation -- although self-esteem was unaffected.

Body Valuation results demonstrated overall increases in children's sense of body worth. Consistent and obvious enhancement for all grade levels and both sexes, occurred only for the finger and the hand. While such a result was not anticipated, its occurrence is explainable by the program's emphasis on "touch". Children conceptualize touch in a concrete manner and associate touch with the hands and fingers. The enhanced body image, therefore, is largely a reflection of the perceived greater importance of touching which developed as a result of the program.

The program appears to have increased appropriate or desirable responses and did so with a statistically acceptable degree of confidence. Nonetheless, statistical significance is based on group means and, while students as a group may have benefited, the results neither prove nor imply that every student involved benefited. Secondly, very small group differences may attain statistical significance as was demonstrated for the Red Light/Green Light Questionnaire. An average change of one-fourth of a point was statistically significant. These statistical concerns are raised not to detract from the program's demonstrated effects, but to prevent an individual, in this highly emotional area, from misinterpreting the program as being a panacea for child sexual misuse. In addition, the involvement and support by the school's staff has not been adequately or sufficiently documented. While this report discusses results as being dependent on the program, such results might not have been possible without a highly motivated staff who often carried the messages from the workshops into the classrooms.

The program would also require some modification in order to be more effective in teaching primary children their rights and how to verbally or nonverbally defend or assert those rights. Further research is required to determine the exact nature of the impact that such a program has on primary children.

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* Instruments used in this study are available from Program Resources